THE "RUTA DE LAS ICNITAS", USE OF PALAEONTOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE AS A TOURIST RESOURCE IN SORIA, SPAIN.

José L. Barco [1,2], Daniel Castilla [2], Sergio Rasal [2], Carlos J. Rubio [2] & José I. Ruiz-Omeñaca [1]

1. Área y Museo de Paleontología. Facultad de Ciencias. Universidad de Zaragoza. E-50009 Zaragoza, Spain. jlbarco@paleoymas.com

2. Paleoymas, S. L. L. Nuestra Señora del Salz, 4. E-50017 Zaragoza, Spain.

Trace fossils are known in Soria Province (Spain) since 1980. Nowadays, almost one hundred localities with Mesozoic reptilian tracks have been found, and 13 new ichnospecies, 4 new ichnogenera and one new ichnofamily have been defined. Palaeontological knowledge is progressively more demanded by the general public, and resulting from a small initial investment of the local and regional governments in Soria province, there was a good turnout to the outcrops. This motivated a bigger investment between 2001 and 2003, which led to the starting of the "Ruta de las Icnitas" ("Route of Tracks"), a palaeontological tourist tour around 14 outcrops previously adapted to allow both protection for the palaeoichnological record, and a comfortable and more understandable visit for the tourist. Fences have been placed around the outcrops to avoid people and sheep trespassing. Before placing them, it was neccesary to remove plants and roots from cracks on the outcrop surface and consolidate it to allow a better conservation. Finally, in each outcrop a board has been placed with different information about its ichnological record, track formation, its relationship with other outcrops and its environmental context. In some points there are also dinosaur reconstructions. The tour starts in a visitor centre that includes an exhibition with boards and authentic tracks, real size dinosaurs (*Iguanodon* and *Compsognathus*), children´s library, screening room, interactive computers, interactive installations, a play area and even a small shop. This centre attempts to serve as a "palaeontological classroom" for schoolchildren and as a small museum to learn about dinosaur and other reptilian tracks in the area before starting the visit to the outcrops.

ICHNOLOGICAL EVIDENCE OF THE PRESENCE OF GIGANTIC THEROPODS IN THE BERRIASIAN (LOWER CRETACEOUS) OF SPAIN

José L. Barco [1,2], José I.Canudo [2], José I. Ruiz-Omeñaca [2], Felix Pérez-Lorente [3] & José L. Rubio de Lucas [4]

1. Paleoymas, S. L. L. Nuestra Señora del Salz, 4. E-50017 Zaragoza, Spain. jlbarco@paleoymas.com 2. Área y Museo de Paleontología. Facultad de Ciencias. Universidad de Zaragoza. E-50009 Zaragoza, Spain. 3. Universidad de La Rioja. Obispo Bustamante, 3. E-26004 Logroño, Spain. 4. Departamento de Ecología. Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. Cantoblanco. E-28049, Madrid, Spain.

The dinosaur fossil record in Berriasian is small, comparing to Upper Jurassic and uppermost Lower Cretaceous all over the world. Theropod, sauropod, ornithopod and avian tracks are abundant and diverse in Tithonian-Berriasian widespread continental outcrops of the Cameros Basin (Central and Western areas of the Iberian Range, Spain). Although theropod tracks are very abundant, gigantic theropods are only represented by an isolated footprint from Las Villasecas (Soria province) and a trackway from Treguajantes (La Rioja province), both Early Berriasian in age. The one from Soria is 69 cm long, and shows thick toes, great claws impressions; absence of *hallux*, and a characteristic medial displacement of the toe II. Its morphology is similar to the trackway from Treguajantes, made up of three footprints 64-70 cm long. Those tracks are different to the ichnogenera of gigantic theropods of similar age and size. Interdigital angles are different in *Megalosauripus* and *Irenesauripus*. *Bueckeburgichnus* shows clearly a *hallux* impression, thus the Spanish tracks could belong to